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May 7, 2008

Dear Judges – FJA Members, Colleagues all:

I write here to provide a brief summary of the recent Federal Judges Association Board meeting which concluded this past Monday morning in Washington, D.C. You will receive a more in-depth report from your circuit representatives within the next few weeks, but this letter will highlight some of the important matters we discussed and reference a few of the significant projects we have underway.

Our most extensive discussions centered on the pending judicial salary legislation, as you might expect. The FJA has been intimately involved in getting these bills through Congress, frequently working to advance their success on a daily basis. We have collaborated each step of the way with Jim Duff and the Administrative Office and continue to do so. You may recall that we were able, in partnership with the Bankruptcy Judges Association and the Magistrate Judges Association, to supply the additional resources of The Livingston Group to help lobby the bill through the Committees. And every week, on Friday afternoons, Past President Irene Keeley and I have participated in the Chief Justice's Task Force teleconferences to review developments and discuss future strategies. The FJA has been a part of this process every step of the way, representing the interests of Article III judges, and we continue to be.

At the recent Board meeting, I provided an update on all these activities. Jim Duff was also present to discuss, with the Board, the current status of these efforts, as well as to brief the Board on the plans going forward. The most important fact is that the bills have made it through each of the Judiciary Committees with the most important provisions intact; that is to say, those that we have worked most diligently to secure: the 29% pay increase for judges, delinkage of judicial salaries from Congressional

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salaries, the repeal of Section 140, and future COLAs tied to the General Schedule. Certain provisions were added to these bills in the respective Judiciary Committees which, while not sought by us and some actually opposed, should not obscure or diminish the huge success that has been achieved at this point. The second most important fact is that our progress at this juncture is more significant and more advanced than ever before.

As things currently stand, we await the action by the House and Senate leaders to bring the bills forward for final passage and then to send them on to the President for his signature. Keeping this matter on their front burner is the daily task of the AO staff, including Jim Duff, and, believe me, each of us who are entrusted with leading the FJA's efforts. While the precise timetable remains uncertain, those of us who are working closely on all of this, and believe we have our fingers on the pulse of things, have confidence that our bills will, in fact, move forward within the next few weeks, certainly before Labor Day. We remain cautiously optimistic.

It was clear from our extended Board discussions that every Board member, to a person, remains strongly committed to doing everything possible to bring this pay raise to final passage at the earliest possible time. We share a sense of frustration, perhaps as you do also, that full Congressional action and enactment have been slow coming. Thus, our Board discussions included consideration of whether there was anything else we should do at this juncture, or whether there was anything that we have previously failed to do or might have overlooked doing that, if done now, might facilitate final passage. Be assured that this issue is revisited by the FJA leadership on an almost daily basis and will continue to be until victory is in hand, and further be assured that whatever actions are thought to be best will be undertaken only after full consultation with the Executive Committee, the Board and, if necessary, the entire membership.

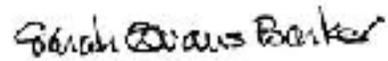
With regard to the Board's consideration of other FJA issues, considerable time was spent on ways to increase/improve judicial security, on senior judge protections and space allocations issues, on matters relating to the courtroom sharing studies conducted by the FJC for consideration by the Judicial Conference, on plans for establishing active, ongoing liaisons with each of the Judicial Conference Committees, and on ways to establish and maintain productive, cordial relationships with Congress in the future and with the new administration, which will arrive in Washington in January 2009. In addition, we began the initial planning discussions for the 2010 Quadrennial Conference, our seventh such gathering in Washington, D.C., set for May 23-26, 2010, to be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. Mark your calendars now!

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As you can see, the FJA is actively engaged in matters of crucial interest and concern to all Article III judges. I assure you that your colleagues who have taken on the added responsibility of serving on the FJA Board do so with admirable dedication and judgment on the wide array of not only seemingly intractable problems, but those which promise new and exciting opportunities. Please know that they welcome your input, ideas, and reactions throughout the year, as do I.

Cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Evans Barker". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sarah Evans Barker, President